UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/50/637
5 December 1995
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

Fiftieth session
Agenda item 140

UNITED NATIONS DECADE OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

Report of the Sixth Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Walid OBEIDAT (Jordan)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The item entitled "United Nations Decade of International Law" was included in the provisional agenda of the fiftieth session of the General Assembly pursuant to paragraph 13 of Assembly resolution 49/50 of 9 December 1994.

2. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 22 September 1995, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the Sixth Committee.

3. In connection with the item, the Sixth Committee had before it the report of the Secretary-General (A/50/368 and Add.1 to 3) on the implementation of the programme for the third term (1995-1996) of the Decade, which was introduced by the Under-Secretary-General, the Legal Counsel, at the 38th meeting, on 14 November 1995.

4. At its previous session, the General Assembly, in paragraph 1 of its resolution 49/50, had requested the Working Group on the United Nations Decade of International Law to continue its work at the fiftieth session in accordance with its mandate and methods of work. Pursuant to that request, the Sixth Committee, at its 6th meeting, on 2 October 1995, elected Mr. Peter Tomka (Slovakia) Chairman of the Working Group for the session. The Working Group held five meetings between 6 and 21 November 1995.

5. At the 45th meeting of the Sixth Committee, on 24 November, the Chairman of the Working Group presented an oral report on the work accomplished by the Working Group (see A/C.6/50/SR.45).

6. The Sixth Committee considered the item at its 38th to 42nd and 45th meetings, from 14 to 20 and on 24 November. The summary records of those meetings contain the views of the representatives who spoke during the Committee's consideration of the item (see A/C.6/50/SR.38-42 and 45).

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.6/50/L.10

7. At the 45th meeting, on 24 November, the Chairman of the Working Group introduced a draft resolution entitled "United Nations Decade of International Law" (A/C.6/50/L.10), proposed by him.

8. At the same meeting, the Sixth Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.6/50/L.10 by consensus (see para. 10).

9. A statement was made by the representative of the United States of America (see A/C.6/50/SR.45).

III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE

10. The Sixth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

United Nations Decade of International Law

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 44/23 of 17 November 1989, by which it declared the period 1990-1999 the United Nations Decade of International Law,

Recalling also that the main purposes of the Decade, according to resolution 44/23, should be, inter alia:

(a) To promote acceptance of and respect for the principles of international law;

(b) To promote means and methods for the peaceful settlement of disputes between States, including resort to and full respect for the International Court of Justice;

(c) To encourage the progressive development of international law and its codification;

(d) To encourage the teaching, study, dissemination and wider appreciation of international law,

Recalling further its resolution 49/50 of 9 December 1994, to which was annexed the programme for the activities for the third term (1995-1996) of the Decade,

Expressing its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report 1/ submitted pursuant to resolution 49/50,

Having considered the above-mentioned report,

Recalling that at its forty-fifth session the Sixth Committee established the Working Group on the United Nations Decade of International Law with a view to preparing generally acceptable recommendations on the programme of activities for the Decade,

Noting that at its forty-sixth, forty-seventh, forty-eighth, forty-ninth and fiftieth sessions the Sixth Committee reconvened the Working Group to continue its work in accordance with resolutions 45/40 of 28 November 1990, 46/53 of 9 December 1991, 47/32 of 25 November 1992, 48/30 of 9 December 1993 and 49/50,

Having considered the oral report of the Chairman of the Working Group submitted to the Sixth Committee, 2/

1. Expresses its appreciation for the work done on the United Nations Decade of International Law at the current session, and requests the Working Group of the Sixth Committee to continue its work at the fifty-first session in accordance with its mandate and methods of work;

2. Also expresses its appreciation to States and international organizations and institutions that have undertaken activities in implementation of the programme for the third term (1995-1996) of the Decade, including sponsoring conferences on various subjects of international law;

3. Further expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for the successful organization of the United Nations Congress on Public International Law, held from 13 to 17 March 1995, noting with satisfaction that the Congress emphasized the importance of all aspects of international law and focused on the four main purposes of the Decade, as well as on new challenges and expectations for the twenty-first century, and requests the Secretary-General, within existing resources, to make the proceedings widely available;

4. Strongly welcomes the recent advances made by the Treaty Section of the Office of Legal Affairs in its programme of computerization of the Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary-General and the United Nations Treaty Series and looks forward to the early effective availability of the former on the Internet and the latter on-line to Member States and other users;

5. Invites all States and international organizations and institutions referred to in the programme to provide, update or supplement information on activities they have undertaken in implementation of it, as appropriate, to the

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1/ A/50/368 and Add.1 and 2.

2/ See A/C.6/50/SR.45.

Secretary-General, as well as to submit their views on possible activities for the next term of the Decade;

6. Requests the Secretary-General to submit, on the basis of such information as well as of new information on the activities of the United Nations relevant to the progressive development of international law and its codification, a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session on the implementation of the programme;

7. Encourages States to disseminate at the national level, as appropriate, information contained in the report of the Secretary-General;

8. Appeals to States, international organizations and non-governmental organizations working in the field of international law and to the private sector to make financial contributions or contributions in kind for the purpose of facilitating the implementation of the programme;

9. Encourages the Office of Legal Affairs to continue in its efforts to bring up to date the publication of the United Nations Treaty Series and the United Nations Juridical Yearbook;

10. Once again requests the Secretary-General to bring to the attention of States and international organizations and institutions working in the field of international law the programme annexed to resolution 49/50;

11. Invites the International Committee of the Red Cross to continue to report on activities undertaken by the Committee and other relevant bodies with regard to the protection of the environment in times of armed conflict, so that the information received may be included in the report to be prepared pursuant to paragraph 6 of the present resolution;

12. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-first session the item entitled "United Nations Decade of International Law".